

Customer Service Week - October 1 through October 5

Customer Service Week is a nationally observed event that occurs the first full week of each October. Once again City agencies hosted a wide variety of events this year to observe Customer Service Week, which provides agency management the opportunity to formally recognize front-line staff for their customer service. As in previous years, agency events ran the gamut – from simple recognition breakfasts to more elaborate, and even unusual, events. The 311 Call Center, for example, had a “sea” theme driving its activities during the week. Each day was devoted to a marine concept, like “Dress like a Pirate Day.” The Department of Transportation held a session of Laughter Yoga, which is designed to reduce stress through laughter. Agencies held various recognition events, such as staff breakfasts as well as more formal recognition ceremonies to let their staff know how much they are appreciated for their hard work.



NYC-311 Content and Relations team celebrate Customer Service Week.

Excellence in Customer Service Award Ceremony

The Excellence in Customer Service Award Ceremony was held on October 24 at the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank on Chambers Street. This award provides recognition to individual agency employees who excelled in providing customer service over the year.

Attended by over 150 guests, including 53 honorees, their supervisors and agency heads, as well as agency Customer Service Liaisons, the ceremony’s highlight was the Mayor’s attendance and speech in which he thanked the honorees for all their hard work. “Our Administration is only as strong as its people. And it’s because of outstanding public servants like the ones we’re honoring today that we’ve been able to accomplish so much for our fellow New Yorkers”, the Mayor told the assembled attendees.



DOT's 2012 Excellence in Customer Service Award recipient Desiree Mercado.

In addition to the yearly individual awards provided to one honoree from each agency, this year the ceremony also recognized honorees for their contributions to selected internal customer service initiatives: eHire, which provides improved, cost-effective recruiting functionality by streamlining, standardizing, and automating the current recruitment process; Enterprise Correspondence, a centralized, multi-channel tool that provides agencies with a complete picture of inbound and outbound correspondence activity; and Fleet Consolidation, which brings together fleet services under one management structure while reducing redundant services.

This year, the Mayor's Office also recognized City staff who completed the DCAS course work to receive a Customer Service Professional Certificate. The Customer Service Professional Certificate was developed jointly by DCAS and the Mayor's Office of Operations as a way to encourage City workers to improve their customer service skills and receive special recognition for their accomplishment.

Sadly, one of the honorees passed away the morning of the ceremony. Juan Ramos, of DOHMH, was to receive a special recognition award for his work on the Fleet Consolidation initiative. The Mayor held a moment of silence in Mr. Ramos' memory.



**Juan Ramos (1949-2012)
DOHMH - Excellence in Customer Service Award Honoree**

Security Guard Manager Language Access Training

For many city agencies, the first point of contact for customers when they visit an agency office is a security guard. With 1.8 million limited-English proficient residents in New York City, many of whom

visit our public-facing walk-in facilities, it is very important for security guards to be trained on the city's language access policy and procedures.

With the focus on helping create friendly first encounters, the Mayor's Office of Operations and DCAS developed a one-day training module for security guard managers. The training, which was conducted on October 23rd, touched upon cultural sensitivity, customer service and language access. Participants who attended the training explored and discussed how diversity and inclusion affect the delivery of services, and worked to improve their ability to communicate about and across differences with employees.

The 30 participants included Allied Barton security managers and DCAS security managers. Additional trainings for front-line security guards are now being developed, and will be offered at DCAS' Citywide Training Center.

For more information, please contact Amina Huda at amasood@cityhall.nyc.gov.

CORE 2012 - NYC's Secret Shopper Program Completes its Fifth Year of Inspections

In 2008, the Mayor's Office of Operations conducted the first citywide secret shopping program, CORE (Customers Observing and Reporting Experiences), sending staff to over 300 walk-in centers. Staff acted as customers and reported back on their experiences, rating the physical conditions and customer service interactions they encountered. The purpose of CORE is to ensure that NYC customers receive prompt and courteous service in facilities that are clean and well-maintained.

Originally conducted by interns, in 2009 CORE was assigned to the Street Conditions Observation Unit (SCOUT). Throughout the year, this team of trained inspectors identifies and reports to City agencies quality of life conditions – potholes, graffiti, etc. – that require attention. For one month each year, SCOUT has turned its resources to the City's walk-in centers and conducts the CORE inspections. This year, inspectors visited 284 walk-in centers, from the NYPD's handgun licensing center and tow pounds, to HRA job centers, to DOF payment centers.

As part of their review, inspectors rate the physical and customer service conditions of both the building which houses the service center and of the service center itself. Customer service conditions include staff and security courtesy and professionalism, as well as customer wait time. Conditions are assigned points and rated according to a four category scale: Excellent (100); Good (67 to 99); Fair (33 to 66), and Poor (0 to 32). This year, citywide scores were 82 for customer service interactions and wait time, and 86 for cleaning and maintenance, resulting in an overall score of 84. Although 16 sites will be re-inspected because they scored below 'Fair' or 'Poor' in cleaning and maintenance, 38 sites received perfect scores of 100 including one each at the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, the City Clerk's Office, BIC, HPD, DOB, DOHMH, NYPD, DOI and SBS. HRA and NYCHA both had eight sites with perfect scores; CCHR and DOE each had two sites with perfect scores and the Parks Department had four sites with perfect scores.



Dirty conditions in a walk-in center restroom.

The Mayor's Office of Operations made a presentation to CORE agencies to share citywide results and to receive feedback on ways the program can be improved. Based on the feedback received from the attendees, the CORE team will re-evaluate the wait time rating criteria, which needs to take into account the different types of services provided by City agencies.

New DOP NeONs Bring Services Close to Home

On August 28, 2012, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg joined the NYC Department of Probation (DOP) for the official opening of the South Bronx Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON). In his remarks, Mayor Bloomberg said, "By bringing Probation's operations to service hubs like this one, we're meeting New York's probation clients where they live. People with criminal histories often operate in a world with limited opportunities. As a result, many are lured back into the same cycle of crime and violence from which they came. But our Administration is determined to help them break that cycle and reduce recidivism."



Mayor Bloomberg, DOP Commissioner Schiraldi and other attendees cut ceremonial ribbon for opening of the South Bronx NeON.

The NeON initiative was launched in December 2011 and is currently serving 1,300 clients at four locations: the South Bronx, Harlem, Brownsville (Brooklyn), and South Jamaica (Queens). By the end of the year, DOP expects to open two additional NeONs in Staten Island and East New York (Brooklyn), which will together serve an additional 630 clients.

The goal of NeON is to expand opportunities for probation clients by linking them to local educators, employers, community leaders and activists who can help them stay out of trouble and realize their personal and professional goals. By joining existing local networks, the NeON is not only meeting specific clients' needs - it is also strengthening their ties to the community.

NeON is a central element of Mayor Bloomberg's Young Men's Initiative (YMI), the nation's most comprehensive public/private effort to tackle broad disparities that are slowing the advancement of black and Latino young men (YMI is administered by the Center for Economic Opportunity). NeON has received unwavering support from Mayor Bloomberg and Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Linda Gibbs.

While the NeON initiative is about much more than simply moving staff closer to our clients, the impact of proximity should not be underestimated. Probation officers are closer to their clients' homes, schools and workplaces, which facilitates site visits and staff participation in community benefit projects. Client supervision can conveniently take place outside the office in neighborhood settings that may be more conducive to building rapport or sharing an experience. Through the NeON, DOP is proving to its clients that being on probation can be more than punishment—it can be an opportunity.

Department of Consumer Affairs' *How Can Consumer Affairs Help You Today?* Campaign Highlights Customer Service

How Can Consumer Affairs Help You Today? That's the question that the Agency's most recent public awareness campaign answered. In its ongoing efforts to empower all New Yorkers to ensure a fair and vibrant marketplace, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) created *How Can Consumer Affairs Help You Today?*, a campaign focused on core services for businesses and consumers. The campaign featured five DCA employees who describe how they help businesses get or renew a DCA license, mediate consumer complaints, educate businesses and consumers, inspect businesses and counsel New Yorkers about their finances. This past summer, campaign ads appeared on subway cars and stations, buses, online and in newspapers.

DCA Deputy Commissioner for External Affairs Fran Freedman said, "We hope that by 'meeting' a few of our hundreds of friendly staff during this public awareness campaign, many more New Yorkers will gain a better sense of the services we offer to help them protect their hard-earned money."



DCA campaign poster.

As part of the campaign, DCA launched a video featuring the DCA staff who "starred" in the ads on its [YouTube](#) channel. Staff talk about their work in English, Spanish and Chinese. DCA also used social media to connect with consumers and businesses by answering their questions on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) using the hashtag #HiDCA. *How Can Consumer Affairs Help You Today?* is the fourth in the Agency's

“Protect Your Money” campaigns. To view all the ads and for more information about “Protect Your Money,” visit nyc.gov/ProtectYourMoney.

Safety, La Seguridad, 安全 Rules for Commercial Bicyclists in NYC

The word is out in multiple languages and it’s “safety” for cyclists who ride on the job. DOT has been facilitating a widespread education and outreach plan to educate businesses that make deliveries on bicycles. This includes door-to-door outreach to Manhattan and Brooklyn-based businesses by the Commercial Bicycle Unit as well as “Do You Deliver?” presentations. These presentations are an opportunity for DOT Safety Educators to educate business owners and shift managers about the law, review the safe bicycling rules, and share tips for communicating the rules to their cyclists. They feature Spanish, Cantonese and Mandarin interpreters.

In January 2013, the Commercial Bicycle Unit will begin the enforcement phase of the program, issuing tickets to business owners who are not in compliance with Administrative Code of the City of New York §10-157 and §10-157.1. For more information, you can find easy-to-read materials on the DOT website. (www.nyc.gov/bikes)

DOT recognizes cycling as an inexpensive, fast, and efficient way to deliver goods. And safety for commercial cyclists means safety in any language for all of us as we travel in NYC!

I am a Business Owner. What am I Required To Do?

1 Post the Commercial Bicyclist Safety poster



2 Provide delivery cyclists with the following:

- A unique 3-digit ID number for each bicyclist
- Upper body apparel with the business' name and bicyclist's 3-digit ID number on the back
- A bicycle helmet in good condition
- Business ID card



3 Equip commercial bicycles with the following:

- A bell or other audible device
- White headlight and red taillight
- Reflectors
- Brakes



Excerpt from DOT outreach material.

311 Online FAQs

Can I double park when alternate side parking is in effect? Does New York City have noise rules? Can I barbecue in the park? 311 Online FAQs give customers a faster, easier way to get answers to these and other questions about City government information and services.

311 Online FAQs launched this summer. With the help of hundreds of customers, 311's Content and Agency Relations team is building out the FAQ section three hundred and eleven (yes, 311) questions at a time. After researching and answering questions from the first batch of 311, the team will take 311 new questions. As questions moves through the review process, customers get email notifications to keep them informed.

FAQs supplement the over 2,000 government services already available on 311 Online. When 311 is accepting questions, customers who search or browse for a topic and don't get the information they need will have the option to suggest an FAQ.



Screen-shot of NYC-311 FAQ page.

A new type of content for 311 Online, FAQs are fully integrated across the website. Top FAQs appear alongside Top Services on the 311 Online homepage. The FAQ homepage features recently answered questions and allows customers to browse FAQs by category. FAQs also appear in search results and on relevant service pages.

Not only do FAQs reduce the number of clicks it takes the 311 Online customer to get an answer, but these neatly packaged question-and-answer sets are also readily available for use in the 311 social media and texting channels, as well as future initiatives such as online chat.

For the answer to the double-parking question, see screen shot below. For answers to other questions visit Top FAQs on 311 Online at www.nyc.gov/311

From Vision to Reality...the Department of Records Unveils Renovated Resources

Visitors to the Municipal Archives and City Hall Library have always been in awe of the beautiful marble lobby at 31 Chambers Street, but few have had the opportunity to experience the wealth of archival and library treasures preserved behind locked doors. Deputy Commissioner Eileen Flannelly and her team at the Department of Records had long desired space suitable for exhibitions and programs that would highlight the agency and its mission. Recently, with much labor and very little money, the team turned the vision into reality by renovating the City Hall Library and transforming two adjoining rooms into the Visitor Center.



Records' newly remodeled Visitor Center.

As a gateway to the Archives and Library, the **Visitor Center** features:

- **Media Room** – equipped with monitors for film and documentary screenings, orientation videos, and for patrons to research the Archives' unique film footage and audio collections.
- **Exhibitions** – drawn from the rich resources of the Archives and Library, the Center features exhibitions highlighting the collections and interpreting themes and topics in city history.
- **Events** – a downtown venue for author book-signings, lectures, and other happenings.
- **Education Outreach** – colleges and high schools are invited to bring students to the Center for orientation classes, presentations, and educational outreach activities.
- **Conference & training space** – city agencies and other organizations are welcome to host their conferences, workshops, training sessions and other special events in the Center.
- **Citystore** – unique products and complimentary city merchandise

City Hall Library

One-hundred years ago, during the Progressive Era, cities around the country established special libraries to educate citizens and leaders of the community about their local governments. The City Hall Library (CHL) is one of the few still in existence. Open to the public, the CHL maintains a collection of nearly 400,000 unique reports, books, periodicals, and documents, both historical and contemporary, produced by, and about, NYC municipal government:

- **Annual Reports** – published by city agencies, many dating back to nineteenth-century
- **Budgets** – city budgets from 1860 to the present
- **Proceedings and minutes** – for legislative and other deliberative bodies
- **Biographical files** – a handy resource for information about local officials
- **Mayoral committees and commissions** – reports and documents
- **Executive Orders, Local Laws, City Charters** – resources for legislative intent research
- **Street name index** – an annotated history of street names in the five boroughs
- **Rules and regulations of City agencies** – Health, Fire, Buildings, Transportation and others
- **Federal, State and other public agency publications** – reports and documents
- **Clipping and pamphlet files** – diverse resource for neighborhood research
- **Civil service materials** – job descriptions, eligibility lists, salary ranges and the annual Civil List

Municipal Archives

In 1920, when Rebecca Rankin became director of the City Hall Library (then called the Municipal Reference Library), she began collecting historical documents from offices around the city and advocating for the establishment of an archives. In the 1940s she urged the city to adopt a records management program to control the growing volume of semi-active records. On June 30, 1952, the day Rankin retired, a combined archival and records management facility, the "Municipal Archives and Records Center" (MARC), became a reality. Although undeniably a remarkable advancement, MARC could only encourage city agency participation in their programs. Finally, in 1977, under the leadership of Council President Paul O'Dwyer, the City Council passed Local Law 49. It established separate Municipal Archives and Municipal Records Management divisions, along with the City Hall Library, within the Department of Records & Information Services. It also gave the Municipal Archives the authority to accession all city records of historical value.

Rebecca Rankin and the many dedicated professionals who followed in her footsteps have made the world-class collections of the Municipal Archives unequalled by any other city in the nation:

- **Photographs** – over two million images dating from the late 19th to the early 21st centuries
- **New Amsterdam records** – manuscripts of daily life four centuries ago
- **Central Park plans** – 1,500 renderings that are works of art
- **Estate and farm maps** – poly-chrome maps of the original farmlands
- **Brooklyn Bridge plans** – 8,000 renderings of one of the most important public works achievements of the 19th century
- **Vital records** – over nine million birth, death and marriage records
- **Waterfront surveys** – detailed maps of the city’s hundreds of miles of waterfront
- **9/11 artifacts** – diverse material and memorabilia related to the attack on the World Trade Center and the city’s response
- **Criminal Court and District Attorney records** – the most comprehensive collection in the English-speaking world
- **Board of Education records** – a matchless source for the study of the history of education
- **Mayors papers** – documentation for virtually every topic in American urban history
- **Parks Department records** – four decades of records created by legendary Commissioner Robert Moses
- **Almshouse** – ledger books with unique information about the city’s less fortunate citizens
- **WNYC** – audio recordings and film footage from the municipal broadcasting system

Users can also access various Records resources online or inquire about holding an event:

- Explore the Department of Records on-line, view over 800,000 historical photographs from the Archives’ collection, search the City Hall Library catalog on-line, and access the full text of every publication issued by City agencies, 2003 to present, at www.nyc.gov/records
- Inquire about holding your event at the Department of Records’ Visitor Center: visitorcenter@nyc.gov/records

Mayor’s Office of Operations

Elizabeth Weinstein, Director, Mayor’s Office of Operations (OPS)

Editor

Francisco Navarro, OPS

Assistant Editor

Rachel Squire, OPS

Contributors

Fran Freedman, DCA
Ryan Dodge, DOP
Leonora Gidlund, DOR
Catherine Messana, DOT
Eleanor Di Palma, DOT
Joe Morrisroe, NYC 311
Linda Ng, NYC311
Francisco Navarro, OPS

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